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A CHART *of* CHURCH HISTORY

Designed as a guide for use
with Confirmation Classes.

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2 Thes. 2:15

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The Church of Jesus Christ

A Chart Showing Church History as a River

Numbers at each paragraph in the text correspond to numbers on arrows along the River. Dates on rectangular signs show the turn of each century.

THE FIVE-FOLD STREAM OF CHURCH LIFE

From the teachings of our Lord, and the practice of the first Christians, we learn the essential elements of the Church, namely

WORSHIP: Vestments, altar, form of prayers.
CREED: Trinitarian formula, gradually formulated into Apostles', Nicene, Athanasian.
MINISTRY: Bishops, Priests, and Deacons.
BIBLE: Old Testament entire. Traditions of Christ, soon written into the books of the New Testament. (See 3 and 6)
SACRAMENTS: 2 "of the Gospel",— Baptism, Holy Communion. Also 5 "commonly called sacraments,"— Confirmation, Orders, Matrimony, Penance, Unction.

No single name. Four adjectives, used in the creeds, have been used to describe :

"The ONE, HOLY, CATHOLIC, and APOSTOLIC Church."

1. **BEFORE CHRIST.** The origin of all things is shrouded in mystery. We only know "In the beginning, God." The Old Testament is the record of the development of the Jewish Church, the Old Dispensation. This testifies to the unity of God, that God is the Creator, that He desires to be worshipped. The Old Testament shows, too, man's need for a Redeemer, and the growing expectation for a Messiah who would some day come.

2. **THE CHURCH IS FOUNDED** by our Lord Jesus Christ, from whose feet comes the fountain of the River. "That rock was Christ,"—1 Cor. 10:4. In the year 29 A. D. the Church started to evangelize the world. It was aggressively missionary from the start.

3. Books of the N. T. written, part of the busy life of the growing Church. Notice that all are written by Christians and for Christians, and so to be interpreted by them. From about 50 to 100 A. D.

6. Canon of N.T. (i. e., authentic list of 27 books) finally closed, at Third Council of Carthage, 397 A. D. Note that the Church is the only authority for the writing and selection of the sacred Scriptures.

4. Three centuries of persecution, ending in 313 A. D., under the Emperor Constantine.

5. **COUNCIL OF NICEA, 325 A. D.** The first complete Council since the days of Christ.

7. Decline of the old Roman Empire and the coming of the Huns.

In 597 A. D. Roman missionaries under St. Augustine come to Britain, but find that Christianity had been implanted there centuries before.

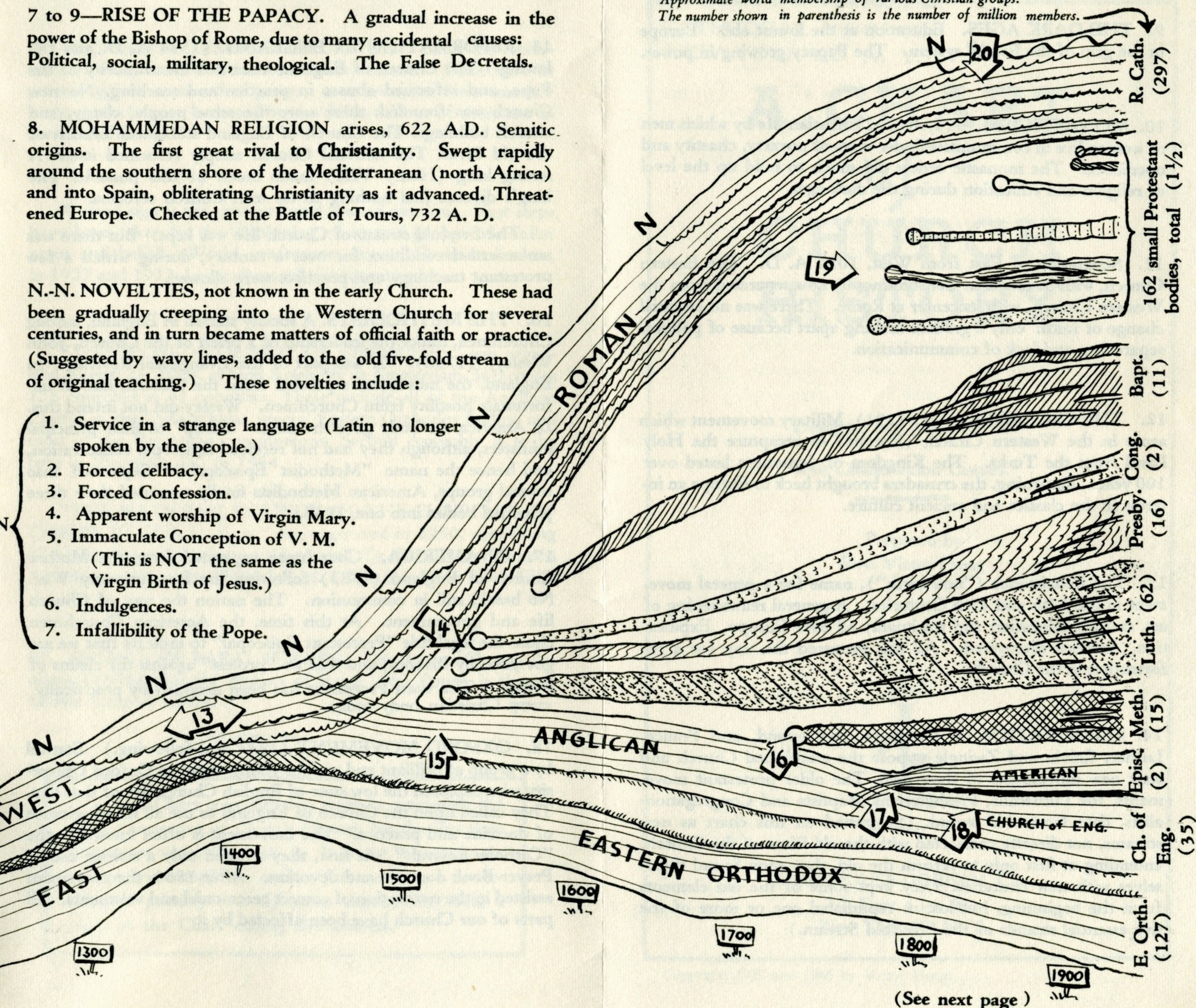
7 to 9—RISE OF THE PAPACY. A gradual increase in the power of the Bishop of Rome, due to many accidental causes: Political, social, military, theological. The False Decretals.

8. MOHAMMEDAN RELIGION arises, 622 A.D. Semitic origins. The first great rival to Christianity. Swept rapidly around the southern shore of the Mediterranean (north Africa) and into Spain, obliterating Christianity as it advanced. Threatened Europe. Checked at the Battle of Tours, 732 A. D.

N.-N. NOVELTIES, not known in the early Church. These had been gradually creeping into the Western Church for several centuries, and in turn became matters of official faith or practice. (Suggested by wavy lines, added to the old five-fold stream of original teaching.) These novelties include:

1. Service in a strange language (Latin no longer spoken by the people.)
2. Forced celibacy.
3. Forced Confession.
4. Apparent worship of Virgin Mary.
5. Immaculate Conception of V. M.
(This is NOT the same as the Virgin Birth of Jesus.)
6. Indulgences.
7. Infallibility of the Pope.

Approximate world membership of various Christian groups.
The number shown in parenthesis is the number of million members.



9. **THE DARK AGES.** Education at the lowest ebb. Europe in the grip of the Feudal system. The Papacy growing in power.

10. **MONASTICISM.** A system of Christian life by which men or women live in communities under vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. The monastic orders did much to hold up the level of religion and education during the dark ages.

11. Separation of East from West, 1054 A. D. The Eastern Church, with its center at Constantinople, now separated from the Western Church, with its center at Rome. There was no essential change of faith: only a gradual drifting apart because of political separation, and lack of communication.

12. **THE CRUSADES (1095-1291).** Military movement which arose in the Western Church (Europe) to recapture the Holy Land from the Turks. The Kingdom of Jerusalem lasted over 100 years. Returning, the crusaders brought back to Europe an interest in the classics and ancient culture.

13. The Renaissance ("new birth"), name for a general movement in the 14th and 15th Centuries. A general reawakening of art, culture, education and spirituality all over Europe. Exploration, America discovered. All this prepared the way for a reformation in the Church.

14. **REFORMATION** in Germany, Switzerland, and France. Luther, Calvin and Zwingli oppose the established Church and start new movements of their own. The older protestant movements, the Lutherans, Presbyterians, Baptists and Congregationalists, date from this period. (Suggested on this chart as new streams, not directly connected with the old River of the Church. Intending at first only to reform the old, they soon found themselves with new churches. They kept some of the old elements from the beginning, but lost or repudiated one or more of the five essential strands of the Five-fold Stream.)

15. **REFORMATION IN ENGLAND.** (1534 A. D. and following.) The Church of England discarded the authority of the Pope, and reformed abuses in practice and teaching. No new Church was founded: there were the same people, clergy, and church buildings. The Church of England still a true branch of the old River. The national Church simply reformed itself. A strong king (Henry VIII) made much of this possible. The king's divorce had nothing to do with Church reforms.

The five-fold stream of Church life was kept. But there was an unsettled condition for over a century, during which a few protestant teachings and practices were allowed.

16. **THE METHODISTS.** A society started in England, among Churchmen, under the leadership of a priest of the Church, John Wesley, (1738). It was part of the Evangelical Revival. In England, the movement separated from the Church, due to unfortunate hostility from Churchmen. Wesley did not intend this. In America the body gave the name "bishop" to their principal ministers, although they had not received Episcopal consecration, and hence the name "Methodist Episcopal." Separated into several groups, American Methodists finally re-united their three principal bodies into one, 1938.

17. **IN AMERICA,** Churchmen separated from the Mother Church of England (1783) following the Revolutionary War. No break, still in communion. The nation the unit of Church life and government. At this time, the American Churchmen chose the legal title "Protestant Episcopal" to indicate that we are governed by Bishops, and that we "protest" against the claims of Rome. The word Protestant has been dropped by practically every Christian body today.

18. **OXFORD MOVEMENT** (1833 and following.) Started by a group of brilliant and zealous young clergy at Oxford University who deplored the low state of English Church life of that day. They called upon the Church of England to use all its inheritance of doctrine and practice. The movement is often known as the "Catholic Revival." At first, they stressed only a stricter use of Prayer Book doctrine and devotion. After 1880, the movement assisted in the restoration of correct ceremonial and vestments. All parts of our Church have been affected by it.